Irrregularities in the Utilisation of drought relief funds

483. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has found several irregularities in the utilisation of drought relief funds by the State Government; and

(b) if so, the details of the findings of CAG and steps proposed to be taken to ensure that relief funds are not misused in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its Report No. 3 of 1999 (for the year ended March, 1998) has pointed out irregularities in the operation of Calamity Relief Funds (CRF), for natural calamities including drought, by various State Governments.

(b) The CAG Report indicates diversion of funds out of CRF, non setting-up of separate CRF, non separation of CRF from general revenues, violation of investment and expenditure norms, expenditure in excess of norms, retention of funds with executing agencies, outstanding utilisation certificates, deficiencies in cash book and instances of alleged misappropriation etc. The observations have been brought to the notice of the State Governments concerned to take corrective measures and to ensure that the CRF is administered in accordance with the Scheme and the guidelines issued by the Central Government.

Decline in rice production

484. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ICAR has noted the decline in some areas of the yield of rice per acre;

(b) what are the reasons for this decline in rice production per acre;

(c) whether it is a fact that wrong use of fertilisers could be one of the main reasons;

(d) what steps has ICAR taken to improve rice productivity in delta areas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Decreased rice yield per acre has been noticed in some States during particular years. A statement showing rice yield in important rice growing such States during nineties is attached. (*see* below)

(b) The reasons for such yield declines include year to year weather fluctuations, emerging micro-nutrient deficiencies, decline in soil quality, imbalanced use of fertilizers, higher incidence of diseases and pests in intensified agriculture etc. Also, one of the reasons of low production per acre in Northern Region is cultivation of basmati type (fine grain quality) rice varieties in preference to other, which have comparatively higher yield potential but coarse grain type.

(c) The imbalanced use of fertilizers is one of the reasons leading to decreased rice yield.

(d) and (e) The ICAR has developed a well focused programme to improve rice productivity in delta areas. The major components of the programme are: development of better rice varieties with higher yields and tolerance to pests and diseases, evolving suitable agro-techniques, site specific Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) method and transfer of technology programme.

Statement

Yield of rice (kg. per hectare) in some important rice growing states during nineties.

Year	Punjab	Haryana	Tamil Nadu	Madhya Pradesh	Orissa	Kerala	Jammu & Kashmir
1990-91	3229	2775	3116	1121	1210	1942	2086
1991-92	3257	2831	3115	1023	1464	1959	1949
1992-93	3391	2659	3116	1024	1213	2017	1863
1993-94	3507	2732	2841	1164	1452	1878	1863
1994-95	3383	2801	3394	1208	1426	1937	2157
1995-96	3132	2225	2712	1093	1375	2023	1863
1996-97	3397	2968	2672	1101	993	1958	1567
1997-98	3465	2800	3050	834	1380	1957	1992
1998-99	3152	2239	3443	1013	1212	1891	2179

Loss of Life and Property due to Natural Calamities

485. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the loss of life and property due to the natural calamities like floods, drought and earthquake, whether Government will take initiative to set up a Natural Disaster Management Board;

(b) whether Government have taken any precautionary step to face the floods during this monsoon in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) which are the States whese the Centre is expected to lend a helping hand to face the floods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) There is at present no proposal under the consideration of the Government to set up such a Board.

(b) to (d) The primary responsibility for undertaking necessary measures in this regard is that of the State Governments concerned. Instalments of Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for 2000-01 have been released to the States for undertaking immediate relief measures in the wake of natural calamities including heavy rains/floods. The Central Water Commission issues necessary periodic bulletins. The Ministry of Agriculture has requested States for detailed reports for taking suitable necessary action.